



Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices

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Award Program Guidelines

See application form, ECY 070-80, (rev. March 2005)

Governor's Award Web site: www.ecy.wa.gov/sustainability/GovAward/gov_awards.htm

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What the judges look for:

The award is given to those applicants that best demonstrate:

- **Comprehensive and successful efforts** to incorporate sustainable practices into their operations;
- **Innovation**, and **leadership** in these efforts; and
- **Commitment** to the principles of sustainability.

It recognizes those who have found ways to offer their products and services while:

- **Reducing or eliminating waste and emissions**
- **Reducing reliance on toxic substances and fossil fuels**
- **Conserving materials, energy and water**
- **Supporting local and global communities**
- **Supporting biodiversity**

What we mean by “sustainability,” “pollution prevention,” etc.:

At its most basic level, **sustainable means “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”** This is the Department of Ecology's working definition of “sustainability.” Sustainability acknowledges that the environment, the economy and the community are interdependent and must support each other.

“Sustainable practices” are efficient, positive for the environment, and support both local and supplier communities. They may entail redesign of products, processes and services. Sustainable practices support all three “legs” of sustainability – a vital economy, healthy environment, and vibrant communities.

“Pollution prevention” is an aspect of sustainable practices. It refers to reducing or eliminating waste, especially hazardous waste, as close as possible to the source. The best form of pollution prevention is not creating the waste in the first place (known as “beginning of the pipe”), rather than trying to figure out what to do with it after it occurs (“end of the pipe”).

Biodiversity, short for “biological diversity,” means the variety of plants, animals and other living things in a particular area or region. It includes the abundance of different species living within a particular region, their genetic variation, and the habitat that sustains them.

Examples of sustainable practices:

- Reducing or eliminating the use of a toxic material.
- Reducing or eliminating the use or creation of persistent, bio-accumulative toxic materials, such as mercury or PCBs.
- Reducing or eliminating solid or hazardous waste **at the source**.
- Reducing or eliminating discharges to air or water **at the source**.
- Increasing the use of renewable and recycled materials.
- Reducing energy use and/or switching to renewable energy sources.
- Reducing water use and/or switching to recycled water.
- Providing take-back programs, where the manufacturer or retailer takes back consumer products at the end of their useful life for refurbishing, reuse, or materials recovery.
- Minimizing the effect upon the environment of a product throughout its life cycle and disposal.
- Providing products and services that have a positive benefit to society and the environment.
- Supporting supplier communities.

Examples from past winners:

University of Washington Motor Pool, 2004 winner: Uses soap and water rather than solvents to clean parts, uses non-chlorinated brake cleaner, reduced annual antifreeze purchases by 300-600 gallons through recycling spent antifreeze, buys re-refined oil for 60% of University fleet. Developed paperless fleet reservation system. Implemented “no idling policy” for UW buses and diesel trucks on campus. Actively supports alternative fuel vehicles.

Columbia Plateau Producers, 2004 winner: Uses direct seeding system for dryland farming. This reduces fuel use (30 to 50%), reduces wind erosion and dust, improves the health of the soil, and sequesters as much as one ton of CO₂ from the atmosphere per acre. Supports the community economy by milling flour locally and selling regionally. Promotes direct seeding through serving on sustainability council and seed association committees, and by farm tours and presentations at colleges in region.

The Wenatchee World, 2002 winner: Switched to digital cameras, thereby avoiding the use of photographic film and developing chemicals, and the need to dispose of them. Redesigned newspaper to reduce size, save paper, and still create award-winning product through taking advantage of new technologies.

Madison Carnolia Cleaners, 2002 winner: Reduced perchloroethylene use from 1,300 gallons per year to less than 95 gallons per year by changing cleaning process and equipment, and setting better maintenance schedule.

Watson Furniture Group, 2002 winner: Switched from virgin materials to recycled and reclaimed materials in building furniture. Located vendor who would use durable shipping blankets to package product rather than cardboard packaging. Designed new facility to protect site’s salmon-bearing stream and wetlands.

Providing measurements and data

The judges particularly look for applicants who can show measurements. Show before and after figures and the time it took to realize your achievements. If you’ve changed your business practices, show what you did before, what you’re doing now, and measure the resulting difference. For example, you reduced carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Just stating that is not enough for the judges to evaluate your effort. It is more compelling to say that you “reduced 1,500 lbs. of CO₂ emissions each month since March 2002” or to provide a trend graph to show reductions.

Examples of reporting measurements

Batdorf and Bronson Coffee Roasters, 2002 winner: Offset 258 tons of CO₂ and other emissions through purchase of 258 “Green Tag” units of investment in wind power.

Columbia River Carbonates, 2002 winner: “Prior to conversion to a new water treatment system ...CRC treated and discharged more than 14 million gallons of process water to the Columbia River each year...CRC is currently operating at zero discharge...by recycling 100% of its process waste water for production and plant wash-down water...Improvements in our process coupled with the new water treatment system have reduced the volume of solid waste/byproduct by 50-60%. In the past we excavated and shipped 10-12,000 tons of material from our settling lagoons each year, today we generate only 4-5,000 tons on an annual basis.”

Showing comprehensive efforts

Show that your efforts are comprehensive, that you have looked at every aspect of your operations. As one judge put it, show that you are striving to “squeeze the last drop of environmental benefit” from your operations. This can include everything from your manufacturing process to your commute trip reduction program to the cleaning supplies used by the custodians.

Example of comprehensive efforts

Mount Baker School District, 2003 winner: Made daily school routine an object lesson in sustainable practices. Reduced toxics use in grounds and building maintenance, reduced chemical use in labs, reduced paper use in administration and classrooms, composted food waste, used compost in classes, built composting system from used parts, established system to collect and reuse materials, shared reusable materials with local tribal school, bought supplies made from recycled stock.

Showing leadership

Leadership is the extra effort you make to increase the reach of environmental stewardship, especially with your own staff and in your field of enterprise. How have you shared your knowledge and expertise with others in your field? Do you educate your staff and customers? Do you lead your community by example? Do you work within your industry or sector to advance the level of environmental stewardship, pollution prevention and sustainable practices?

Examples of leadership

The Wenatchee World, 2002 winner: Received the “Best of Show” for color reproduction among all-sized newspapers in the U.S., demonstrating that quality can be achieved while reducing waste and use of toxic inks in the manufacturing process. Started the “World Recycling Award” to reward its employees for good recycling habits.

Madison Carnolia Cleaners, 2002 winner: Opened facility for agency and industry training inspections, offered examples of its maintenance log and spill prevention plan to peers, routinely promotes their own environmental ethic in the facility’s lobby and through newspaper ads.

Showing commitment

Being committed to the principles of sustainability means more than just adopting a mission statement or starting a pilot project. Real commitment is shown by planning for the long term, incorporating changes into standard operating procedures, and getting all levels – management to line worker – to buy in to the effort.

Examples of commitment

Aaron’s Bicycle Repair, 2003 winner: Encourages customers to purchase durable products that can be reused rather than continually buying new items. “In our approach, we offer a vehicle which has the smallest impact on the earth, and then we maintain and fix that vehicle using the most environmentally sound approach possible.”

Corry's Fine Dry Cleaning, 2004 winner: Small, family-run business invested \$280,000 in new dry-cleaning equipment and process in order to eliminate the use of perchloroethylene. Expects to be in business in this community for the long-term so have purchased both the facility and the land.

Naval Submarine Base, Bangor, 2003 winner: "Any new products not on the [Authorized Use List] undergo a review process to ensure against unnecessary use of reproductive stressor chemicals, ozone depleting substances, and other chemicals that have known better substitutes."

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices?

It is an annual award that the Governor of Washington presents to those who have shown outstanding leadership in preventing pollution and moving towards sustainability while accomplishing their own objectives. The Department of Ecology administers the competition for the award. The Governor presents the award trophies to the winners at a ceremony in the fall. The Department of Ecology publicizes the winners throughout the state and to media outlets selected by the winners.

Who can apply for this award?

Any Washington business, organization, agency or school is eligible. A regional or national enterprise with an office in Washington is eligible, but the application must show the environmental benefit to Washington.

Applicants must be in good standing with environmental regulations. Any compliance issues must have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Department of Ecology. Your application should be upfront about this. It will not reflect well if the problem comes out in the review process.

Do I have to complete my own application?

No. You probably know your operations best, but if you think someone else can craft a better description of your work and results, then you can have them complete the application. Please be sure to show the contact information for the person who filled out the application, in case the reviewers have any questions for them. Ecology employees may not complete the application for you, although they can offer advice and guidance on how to best present your information.

Where can I get help in developing my application?

- **Study these guidelines.** They provide helpful tips on how to most effectively present your accomplishments.
- **Read the sample applications from past winners** on the award program's Web site.
- **Talk to the people at Ecology.** The toxics reduction technical assistance staff at the Ecology office nearest you can help you with information and ideas. Lead staff members at the local offices are:
 - **Leatta Dahlhoff**, Southwest Region – (360) 407-6339; leda461@ecy.wa.gov
 - **Chad Fisher**, Northwest Region – (425) 649-7281; cfis461@ecy.wa.gov
 - **Mark Benedict**, Central Region – (509) 575-2803; mben461@ecy.wa.gov
 - **John Blunt**, Eastern Region – (509) 329-3525; jblu461@ecy.wa.gov
- **Read Ecology's sustainability materials.** The booklet, *A Field Guide to Sustainability* (Pub. 03-04-005) is a good start. Visit Ecology's Sustainability Web site – <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/sustainability> – and follow the links to more information.
- **Check the Web and local library.** There is a wealth of information available on sustainability and pollution prevention.

What if I can't answer a question?

See “Where can I get help?” above. If a question doesn't apply to you, explain why.

The application should be six pages. How many words is that?

Approximately 3,000 words. You can include up to 10 pages of attachments, such as news articles, tables of data, photographs, and certifications. **Do not exceed this limit; extra pages will not be considered.**

I need to send my attachments separately from the application. What if they come late?

If the application is received on time and you notify us that the attachments are coming, we will accept them. But we will not delay the review process to wait for late attachments.

Are there a set number of winners each year? Are there categories of winners?

There is no set number of winners each year. Judging and awarding are not done by categories. The application form asks about the size and type of your enterprise to help the judges as they compare the finalists.

How are the applications judged?

All applications are screened first for basic eligibility. Eligible applications are sent to Ecology staff members who work in the region of the state in which the applicant is based. These staff members check for compliance with environmental regulations and general quality of performance. This may involve a visit to the applicant. Ecology headquarters staff then conducts a final review.

The reviews narrow the field of applicants down to a short list of finalists. Finalist applications are sent to a panel of judges who will make the final selection. The judges review the finalist applications separately and then meet to select the winners.

Who are the judges?

The judging panel includes previous winners, sustainability and pollution prevention experts from local and federal government, labor, environmental organizations, and academia.

I'm a consultant. I help other companies do a better job of protecting the environment while doing their work. Does this qualify?

The Governor's Award is given for environmental results in Washington state. You will need to show the **measurable results** of your work with your clients, and what they have done to move toward sustainability as a result of your guidance. Be sure to include what your company does in its own operations.

What about recycling? Doesn't that count?

Recycling material is more beneficial than landfilling or incinerating, but it is **not** considered pollution prevention. True pollution prevention is not creating the waste or using the material in the first place. Recycling, and buying recycled products, does contribute to sustainable practices by extending the life of a resource. If you include recycling in your application, be sure to **describe what happens to that material.**

